



Sept. 5th, 2023

Testimony on 2023 Senate Bill 321

Relating to: child sex dolls and providing a penalty.

Thank you Chairman Wanggaard and other committee members for hearing this proposed legislation today. Our world is changing, and with the increase of technological advances can come interesting, innovative ideas that move our world forward. However, technology can also bring advances that are inappropriate, dark, and disgusting.

How many of you have heard about child sex dolls? What are they? First I want to share that they are not child play dolls, or Barbies. These are life-like dolls, mannequins, or robots that resemble a minor. They can be fully customizable in how they look and sound. They are used by adults who have a sexual attraction to children, or pedophiles. Or, instead of calling them pedophiles, some are trying to normalize their behavior and call them minor-attracted persons (MAP's).

Some say MAP's have these "dolls" for non-sexual reasons, which include not being able to have emotional closeness and/or a lack of maintaining viable and real intimate partners. Some say they obtain them to improve their overall life satisfaction and well-being, which includes sexual well-being. Those who own these child sex dolls say they are less likely to go seek the real thing because they can just use, abuse, and fulfill their child sexual fantasies with these dolls. Some argue that child sex dolls offer a safe outlet for those who have a sexual attraction to children. We do not have any clinical data to show that this is true.

As a law enforcement officer, I do not need to wait for data to tell me what these dolls lead to. I have a hard time believing that someone who possesses this kind of doll would not also be acting out their desire in a way that involved a real child. In my conversations with child crimes investigators regarding this legislation, they confirmed that these dolls have always been confiscated alongside child pornography or in conjunction with a crime against a real child.

In April of this year, a local law enforcement agency had contact with a man in the Chippewa Valley area. This man bought a child sex doll online. Now from what I have been told and understand, these child sex dolls are not being manufactured in the United States. This child sex doll came from the Middle East, and the man paid \$30,000 for it. This child sex doll could be programmed to do a lot of things, including heating up to body temperature, shaking and shivering, making sexual sounds, and saying sexual phrases. This man could program this doll to satisfy any sexual desires and fantasy he had.

Another glaring, dark, and disturbing reality to add to this is that these dolls can be made to resemble children as young as infants. I was a sensitive crimes investigator for approximately 5 years. I investigated child sexual assaults, including infants. These instances are hard to forget. If you have children, if you have grandchildren, if you have nieces and nephews, would you want any of them to be made to resemble a child sex doll? These dolls are customized to whatever age group one desires, whatever sex one desires, whatever skin color one desires; whatever you want them to look like, it can be done.

STATE SENATOR

JESSE



JAMES

23RD DISTRICT

Let's think about the end result of normalizing these dolls. Wouldn't on-demand sexual access to these child sex dolls increase the need for sexual activity when a person is aroused? Those with uncontrollable sex drives, how would it affect them? How often would the need for sex with a child be there? Would there be an increased mindset of sexual entitlement? I want it now, so I get it now. Given the technology advances and programming available, there could be perceived consent from these child sex dolls, which could increase the perception of these owners that children are sexual beings who can give valid consent to sexual activities. If one were to have this mindset, it would lead to more offending behaviors with our children.

This topic has been on the radar since 2019, when other states started to outlaw child sex dolls. States like Florida, Tennessee, South Dakota, Hawaii, and recently Arizona have signed legislation banning them. At the federal level, the Creeper Act, which makes it a federal crime to import, transport, buy, sell, distribute, or possess a child sex doll, has been trying to pass since 2017. England has banned them, and Canada treats the dolls as child pornography. Wisconsin has the opportunity to take a proactive step in addressing this issue.

The legislation would make possession of a child sex doll a felony and punishable up to 3.5 years in prison. Having three or more child sex dolls and a second offense would include up to six years of prison. A third or subsequent offense would be punishable up to 10 years. If the child sex doll resembled a specific minor, the offender would face up to 15 years in prison for a first offense. Subsequent offenses would be punishable up to 25 years.

Some would say they want to base laws on data and evidence rather than emotion, and would add that this legislation is unconstitutional due to an invasion of privacy. They would add that we are obligated as a society to provide a harmless outlet for MAP's to use these child sex dolls, preventing sexual assaults against children. But those who purchase these child sex dolls already have in their mind the group they want to target. They are seeking an outlet trying to fulfill their sexual desires and fantasies, all which involve our children. The need for these child sex dolls are temporary, and in my opinion they will eventually seek out the real thing. Why do they need to go online and buy them, if they are not seeking the real thing at the time of purchase? They have it in their mind already.

As a cop, dad, and grandfather, I will never be a part of anything that normalizes sex with our children. I will do anything and everything to protect the innocence of our children against adults who want to victimize them because of their own sexual deviant and dark desires. I encourage you to support this legislation. Let's keep the door closed on destructive sexual behavior in our state. Thank you, and we will take any questions you have.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jesse James".

Senator Jesse James



JOY GOEBEN

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 5th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

September 5, 2023

Thank you Chairman Wangaard and other committee members for taking the time to hear this proposed legislation. The information you will hear today came to me in my first few months of being in office. It was definitely not something on my radar as I started my position in the legislature. But a constituent who worked in law enforcement contacted my office and brought it to my attention. They informed me that there were child sex dolls in our state. Child sex dolls. Not dolls to play with. But dolls created to have sex with that look, feel, and sound like real children.

At first I had a bit of disbelief. But I got on the internet and began doing a few quick searches and knew right away that something had to be done to protect our children from these horrible creations. I have a 10 year old daughter. Some of these dolls had the same size, shape, and similar appearance to my little girl. An age that should be filled with innocent ideas, are instead being portrayed in a sexual manner.

These "dolls" are not what you would normally think of when that word is used. They are extremely life-like. Made of a substance and texture that feels of real skin and body tissue. Manufacturers offer the opportunity to tailor skin, hair and eye color, and body shape. The dolls are made to have similar weight to a child. They can have heaters installed in them to make the dolls feel warm like a real child. They have anatomically correct orifices, including vaginas, anuses and mouths, which are in place specifically for sexual gratification. They are programmable to allow them to "communicate" with the user. Whether the user would like a pliable, willing participant making noises of pleasure, or a non-willing victim emitting sounds of pain, distress, and fear.

There is an argument that these "dolls" are used to give an outlet to people who are sexually attracted to children. Give them a place to take out their fantasies without actually taking action with a child. But there is no evidence for that. It is more likely that interaction with child sex dolls will increase the likelihood of child sexual abuse by desensitizing the user to the physical, emotional and psychological harm caused as well as by normalizing the behavior in the mind of the user. Those who have experience working to protect our children against sexual predators understand and support the need to prevent these "dolls" from being part of our society.

This proposed legislation makes it a crime to intentionally possess a "child sex doll," that is intended for use in sex acts, for sexual gratification, or for manipulating children into participating in sex acts, instructing children how to participate in sex acts, or normalizing sexual behavior with children. The penalties for the crime vary depending on whether the violation is a repeat offense, how many such dolls are possessed, and past convictions for other crimes against children. The bill also prohibits intentionally selling, transferring, advertising, displaying, or providing a premise for the use of a child sex doll. Similarly, the bill prohibits intentionally manufacturing a child sex doll.

I strongly hope you will support this legislation that works to protect our children. Other states, like Hawaii, Tennessee, South Dakota, Florida, and most recently Arizona, have already taken a stand to do so. Please end the normalization of sex with children.

Thank you.

Representative Joy Goeben



KAREN HURD
STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 68TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Senate Bill 321
Public Testimony
Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety
September 5, 2023

Thank you, Chair Wanggaard and members of the committee for holding this hearing on Senate Bill 321.

Children rely upon adults for their protection and defense. They have not the means, the physical strength, the mental maturity, or the psychological development to repel acts that are targeted to manipulate them, use them, and/or abuse them. We have been charged by our constituents via our election to office to make laws that would accomplish protection of our society which includes the most vulnerable among us—children.

Child sex dolls encourage sexual abuse of children. Senate Bill 321 is essential to protect our children from those that would prey upon them. For those that would claim that no harm is being done as the user is the only one who interacts with the doll—an inanimate object—I would refer them to lessons in nature.

All humankind has base appetites whether that be hunger or thirst, desire to feel happy, or sexual desires. However, if these base appetites are allowed to run rampant harm occurs, not only to the individual but to society as a whole. If a person eats too much, obesity and the cost to society in the myriad of health issues that result occurs. Drinking too much can result in an inability to control a car or other actions. Determining and acting upon what makes oneself happy often infringes on the personal rights of others. Feeding and encouraging sexual desires easily results in the taking advantage of others. In the case of a child sex doll, the victims will be the children whom we are charged to protect.

Allowing ourselves to devolve into depravity is all too easy to do. The downward slide into such a state should never be allowed when innocent others will be affected by such actions.

Mr. Chairman, I am in full support of Senate Bill 321 which makes it a crime to intentionally possess a child sex doll.

My name is Zach Jakel, and I am an Investigator with the Ashwaubenon Department of Public Safety. I have been in law enforcement for the past ten years, seven of those years have been in the Investigative Unit. I started working in Sensitive Crimes in May of 2020. I have been working on homicides, domestic violence incidents, sexual assaults, and crimes against children. I am also trained as a child forensic interviewer and speak with them about different incidents, such as drug endangerment, domestic abuse, and sexual assaults against them.

I am here today to talk about child-like sex dolls. I first heard about these dolls while working with my partner, Investigator Aaron Dufek. Investigator Dufek works on Internet Crimes against Children cases, and he came across a bulletin from another law enforcement agency warning us about these child-like dolls and individuals having sexual intercourse with them and posting it online.

Over my years in law enforcement, I have seen and heard about some horrific scenes and stories. Nothing has flipped my stomach more than hearing about these dolls. My first thoughts were probably like most people's thoughts: "I did not even know these dolls existed." The fact these dolls do exist makes me squirm. These dolls are inherently gross and directly related to other pedophilic acts.

Individuals who have a pedophilia disorder do not obviously start out at the level of having sexual encounters with children. It starts with fantasies and role playing in their mind. This can lead to watching child pornography, to self-pleasuring while viewing child pornography. This may lead to making child pornography or stalking a child in real life. This could finally lead to someone acting out their fantasies and sexually assaulting a child, when that opportunity presents itself.

Not all people with pedophilic behavior end up sexually assaulting children. But what prevents them from acting out these fantasies? Pedophiles know these actions are socially wrong and have the feelings of shame or guilt. They then avoid places with children due to these psychosocial impairments. They avoid social events or family gatherings due to the general fear of being "found out."

There is a report from the Australian Institute of Criminology on this issue which states, "[It is] reasonable to assume that interaction with child sex dolls could increase the likelihood of the child sexual abuse by desensitizing the doll user to the physical, emotional and psychological harm caused by child sexual abuse and normalizing the behavior in the mind of the abuser. At the same time, there is no evidence of therapeutic benefit from child sex doll use."

This relates to tolerance. The child sex dolls reinforce sexual attractions to children which over time may lead to engaging sexually with real children to achieve the same level of satisfaction. Sex dolls result in the dehumanization of sex and intimacy by allowing users to physically act out rape fantasies in a way that fantasies and child pornography cannot. When child sexual encounters are normalized by these child sex dolls, the feelings of shame or guilt which was preventing them from sexually offending goes away. The possession of child sex dolls is the promotion of sexual offending and is a crime against society.

There are many other crimes against society such as prostitution, pornography, gambling, obstruction, drugs, liquor laws, and weapons. Most of these do not have an individual victim. As a society we must have ethical standards, and the possession of child sex dolls and promoting sexual offending crosses that line.